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MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE
AND
TIMES,
OF
Sir *Thomas Deveil*, Knt.

MARIOLATRIE

MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE and TIMES,
OF
Sir *Thomas Deveil*, Knight,
ONE OF
His Majesty's JUSTICES of the PEACE,
For the COUNTIES of
Middlesex, *Essex*, *Surry* and *Hertfordshire*,
THE
CITY and Liberty of *Westminster*,
THE
Tower of LONDON, and the Liberties thereof, &c.

Aude aliquid, si vis esse aliquis.

LONDON:

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MEMOIRS
OF
Sir *Thomas DeVeil*, Knt. &c.

THERE ſeems to be no kind of writing more in favour with the preſent age, than memoirs, or accounts of perſons who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the world, by arms or arts, by wit or learning, in a civil, military, naval, or commercial capacity. In all the different ſcenes, as well as all the different ſeaſons of life, if facts are properly diſpoſed, there is a great and amiable variety, which, at once, amuſes and furniſhes inſtruction to the reader. It is for this reaſon, that the lives of perſons, diſtinguiſhed in the world, are always read with more eagerneſs and pleaſure, than moſt other books; becauſe, however people may differ in their public ſtations; in their private characters, in their virtues and vices, inclinations and averſions, they ſtand much upon

the ſame foot, and it gives the ordinary rank of mankind, no ſmall pleaſure to find, that ſo it is; and that how different appearances ſoever men wear, yet follow them cloſe, enter with them into their cabinets, or, which is ſtill more, into their private thoughts, and the dark receſſes of their minds, and they will be found pretty much upon a level.

THERE is another advantage that attends this kind of writing, which renders it ſtill more curious, uſeful and entertaining; and that is, that it ſhews us what kind of abilities are requiſite in different profeſſions; and in this reſpect, the following pages may boaſt of ſomewhat new. We have the memoirs of many able ſtateſmen, great captains, gallant ſeamen, and indeed, of almoſt all profeſſions, but the memoirs of a magiſtrate, the life of a juſtice of the peace, has ſcarce hitherto appeared, and yet it will be found, that this, like all other characters, requires particular talents, and that the qualities which render a man capable of ſhining therein, are not ſo common, or ſo trivial, as many people imagine.

Sir *Thomas De Veil*, was a gentleman, who paſſed thro' many ſcenes of life, and raiſed himſelf by his perſonal merit, from carrying a brown muſket

muſket, to make a very conſiderable figure in the world. To trace him therefore from the beginning, to ſhew by what ſteps he fell in the earlier part of his life, into great difficulties; how he extricated himſelf from theſe, by a vigorous application of his parts, as he ſupported them with a very manly patience; how he accommodated himſelf to all the different ſtations through which he paſſed; how he made them all ſubſervient to his purpoſes, gaining in each new lights, and new experience, which he rendered uſeful to him, in theſe following ſtages of his journey through the world. How his induſtry ſupported him when he had little elſe to ſubſiſt on, and how, by his activity and dexterity in employments, which would hardly have made any other man conſiderable, he made friends, and thereby raiſed himſelf to a ſuperior rank in life, muſt give great ſatisfaction to every intelligent reader, more eſpecially, as all we have to ſay, relates to perſons, things and events, with which every one is acquainted, and about the truth of which, therefore, no-body can be at a loſs; we ſhall ſee from hence, that courage, indefatigable diligence, and a certain boldneſs in addreſs, will carry a man through moſt of thoſe troubles, that are incident to ſetting out in the world, with few friends, and a very ſmall fortune.

We ſhall ſee, that if a man is not wanting to himſelf, no rubs that lie in his way, can hinder him from riſing, and that a perſon, who does his duty in his poſt, and has a juſt reſpect for the ſervice of the public, will always find his account in it, though he may have ſome weakneſſes and failings, and be now and then carried in purſuit of his intereſt, into ſome little errors in his conduct. Theſe will prove very uſeful leſſons to the penetrating and the prudent; as for lighter kind of readers, they will find enough for amuſement, in the varieties of a ſcene of ſuch diverſity of ſubjects, that ſcarce any two pages contain matter of the ſame nature; we have the more reaſon to hope, that theſe memoirs will give general pleaſure, ſince they have been collected with great care, from perſons who had occaſion to be well informed of the facts which they communicated, and are penn'd with all imaginable impartiality, without any view of repreſenting him, to whom they relate, better or worſe, weaker or wiſer, more a patriot, or leſs a courtier, than he really was. Thus much it was neceſſary to ſay, by way of introduction, let us now proceed to matters of fact.

WHILE this gentleman was living, people took the liberty of aſperſing him, as if he had been a foreigner by birth, and meanly deſcended, neither of which were true. His father the reverend Dr. *Hans De Veil*, was of a good family in *Lorain*, had the happineſs of an excellent education, and was a man of great natural parts, and profound learning, as the works that he publiſhed full ſhew. He was a thorough maſter of *Hebrew*, and of all the rabbinical litrature, which enabled him to write an admirable book *on ſacrifices*, and a commentary upon *the minor prophets*, both of which have been juſtly eſteemed by thoſe who were beſt verſed in theſe ſubjects. He came over into *England* before the revolution, was a miniſter of the church by law eſtabliſhed, library-keeper at *Lambeth*, and had great credit with the famous archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, who was his patron and his friend.

HIS wife was a very grave good ſort of woman, and particularly careful of his family, ſo that his ſon *Thomas* paſſed the firſt years of his life under very ſtrict diſcipline, and had as much care taken of his manners, as of his learning, to which he had a great propenſity, and by the care of his father, laid ſuch a foundation while a child, as

was

was very uſeful to him after he became a man. He was born in St. *Paul*'s *Chnrch-yard*, where his father then lived, in 1684, and remained with his parents till he attained the age of ſixteen, or thereabouts, and then it was thought requiſite, as his father's circumſtances were but narrow, that he ſhould go into the World, in order to become maſter of ſome trade, or other, that might put him into a way of getting his bread. Several methods were thought of, but at laſt it was agreed, that he ſhould go to a *Mercer*, and accordingly a maſter was found for him, under whom it was thought he might have paſſed the time of his apprenticeſhip very eaſily and happily; and as he was very dutiful to his parents, he willingly conſented to what they thought expedient for him, and was accordingly bound.

THE perſon to whom he was put prentice, lived in *Queen's-ſtreet*, near *Cheapſide*, and for ſome few months, things went happily, the maſter expreſſed great ſatisfaction in reſpect to the boy's conduct, and the young man, who was naturally induſtrious, applied himſelf cloſe to buſineſs, and might, in all probability, have done very well. But an unlucky accident, which happened in leſs than a year, intirely changed the face of his affairs; in ſhort, his maſter broke,

and

and as his father had ſtrained himſelf to the utmoſt, to put his ſon out to this trade, he was able to do little more for him, ſo that he found himſelf obliged to put himſelf in the way of preferment (the war breaking out about that time) into the army, where he thought it no indignity, as indeed perſons of the greateſt quality have never thought it any, to enter himſelf as a private man.

We have no particular, or diſtinct accounts of the regiments in which he ſerved, or the manner in which he was advanced; all we know, is, that his capacity and readineſs in learning languages, were very ſoon taken notice of, more eſpecially after he came to fall under the eye of the lord viſcount *Galway*, who being himſelf a *French* proteſtant, did not like him the worſe for being of foreign extraction. That gentleman's ſtory is too well known, for me to dwell long upon it. His father M: *Rouvigni*, was ambaſſador here from *France*, in the reign of king *Charles* II. And after the revocation of the edict of *Nantz*, his ſon, and the whole family, quitted their native country, to come and ſettle here. The young *Rouvigni* ſerved firſt in *Ireland*, and having been very inſtrumental in the reduction of that kingdom, grew much into the favour of king *William*,

am, who created him lord *Galway*, and had a very good opinion of his abilities, both as an officer and as a minister.

In the beginning of queen *Ann*'s reign, he was sent over in both capacities to *Portugal*, where he acted at court as minister plenipotentiary from her *Britannic* majesty, and in the field, as commander in chief of the forces which she furnished on that side, for the service of the common cause. It was here that Mr. *De Veil* became known to his lordship, who, at first, very probably, proposed nothing farther in doing him service, than gratifying a generous inclination to assist a gentleman in distress; but when he came to be more throughly acquainted with him, and found how far it was in his power to be useful to him in various respects, he began to have a much greater respect for him, and that increased in proportion to the services he did him, which were of such a nature, that besides entertaining him as a kind of secretary, he was also pleased to bestow upon him a troop of dragoons, and that was the beginning of his fortune.

The service in *Portugal*, was very expensive to the nation, though from abundance of cross accidents, it was far enough from proving advanta-

geous

geous to the common cauſe; but it gave lord *Galway* an opportunity of providing for a multitudes of his countrymen, whom he loved as tenderly, as if they had been really what he commonly called them, *his children.* But this humour, tho' very natural, and very excuſable, at leaſt, if not very commendable in his lordſhip, rendered him diſagreeable to an *Engliſh* army, ſo that they ſpoke very contemptible of him, tho' he was certainly very brave in his perſon, and had all the abilities requiſite to fill his employments. How juſt a ſenſe he had of the honour done him by the *Engliſh* nation, may appear from the following ſtory, often told by Sir *Thomas De Veil*, and which ought to be remembered to that nobleman's honour.

THE king of *Portugal*, who began to draw greater advantages from the *Braſils*, than any of his predeceſſors had done, was very uneaſy at the ſight of the golds vaniſhing, that came from thence, almoſt as ſoon as it appeared, and being informed, that the greateſt part of it was ſent to *England*, he conſulted privately with his miniſters, about finding out ways and means for putting a ſtop to this, in order to keep the money at home; and a project was formed for this purpoſe, which turned chiefly upon two points, one was ſetting

up manufactures in his own country, for ſupplying the people of *Braſil* with what they wanted; and the other, putting the laws ſtrictly in execution, which had been made for preventing the exportation of gold. This ſcheme was kept very private; but as he had a great confidence in lord *Galway*, and believed him to be, as he really was, a man of great honour and ſincerity, he reſolved to take his opinion upon it. He propoſed to him accordingly, a true ſtate of what he called his grievances, and of the remedies which he judged neceſſary, and then deſired his ſentiments as to their being practicable.

LORD *Galway* heard him with great attention, and having firſt deſired and obtained liberty to deliver his own opinion freely; he told the king, in the firſt place, that his complaint was not ſo well founded as he imagined, ſince the ſituation of his dominions, made it requiſite for him, to depend conſtantly on his allies, for his ſecurity, againſt neighbours, who, as he very well knew, were inclined to do him all the miſchief they could, and were powerful enough to do it, if he was not aſſiſted by his friends. But he obſerved, that while he lived upon good terms with the *Britiſh* nation, he was ſure of receiving ſuccours from them, proportionable both to his wants and wiſhes, and

therefore

therefore he ought to conſider this as a great alleviation of the grievances which he took ſo heavily. He told him, that to the remedies propoſed, he would not enquire, whether they might, or might not prove effectual; if the latter was the caſe, he would not be barely diſappointed, but would alſo looſe the hearts of his allies, by making the experiment; and if the former happened, that is to ſay, if by his contrivances, the gold could be kept in *Portugal*, he would very ſoon find worſe conſequences flow from thence. As things then ſtood; he ſhewed him, that the *Engliſh* weavers, taylors, ſhoemakers, and other tradeſmen, wrought for his ſubjects in *Braſil*; the *Engliſh* merchants were at the pains to ſend theſe goods to *Liſbon*, and a great many ſhips, and ſome hundred of ſeamen, were annually employed in this trade, which ſuddenly taken away from them, would leave thouſands of people deſtitute of ſubſiſtance. But as this proceeding would be a direct and flagrant breach of the alliances, ſubſiſting between the two nations, it might be feared, that numbers of the people ſo diſtreſſed, might turn ſoldiers, and embarking on board the very ſhips turned out of the *Portugal* trade, might prove ſtrong enough to attack and conquer the *Braſils*.

In ſhort, he ſhewed him, that providence had made a wiſe and juſt diſtribution of wealth to the one, and induſtry to the other, which proved a bond of harmony, and a ſource of happineſs to both; that if this was taken away, wars would certainly follow, and the power that was weakeſt at ſea, would certainly have the worſt of it. The king and his miniſters having conſidered this attentively, ſaw the ſtrength and juſtice of his lordſhip's obſervations, and immediately laid aſide their former deſign. This was a very important ſervice rendered to the *Engliſh* nation, and as ſuch, ought to be remembered and eſteemed. But to return to Captain *De Veil*.

While he remained in this country, he contracted acquaintances with ſeveral officers of diſtinction, which proved very advantageous to him in the ſubſequent part of his life. Amongſt theſe, we may juſtly reckon his intimacy with colonel *Martin Bladen*, a gentleman, who, like himſelf, owed his riſe to perſonal merit. He was, if I have been right informed, originally bred to the law, but having a taſte for letters, he tranſlated *Cæſar*'s commentaries, which he dedicated to the duke of *Marlborough*, whoſe favour brought him

into

into, and preferred him in the army; and as he likewiſe happened to ſerve in *Portugal*, where he was much in the good graces of lord *Galway*, this gave him the opportunity of knowing the merit and capacity of captain *De Veil*, for whom he expreſſed an early, and with whom he maintained a ſincere friendſhip during the remainder of their lives.

THE regiment in which captain *De Veil* ſerved, being reduced, he came over into *England*, and having a family, a love for company, and a taſte for pleaſure, he found it impoſſible to maintain the former, and gratify the latter, upon the narrow income of his half-pay, to help this out, therefore, he had recourſe to an employment, for which no man living was ever better qualified, and that was, ſoliciting at the war-office, the treaſury, and other public boards, drawing petitions, caſes, and repreſentations, memorials, and ſuch kind of papers, for which he kept an office in *Scotland-yard*, and as he wrote a good ſtile in *French*, as well as *Engliſh*, underſtood moſt of the modern languages, had a general notion of, and a ſtrong turn to buſineſs, he carried it on with reputation and profit.

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It has been ſaid, that in this ſituation of life, the captain ſhewed a ſtrong appetite for money, in excuſe of which, it may be truly replied, that he had many demands for it, and conſequently could not be without it. He had, beſides, a great principle of juſtice, loved to pay people, hated debt, and was fully perſuaded, that a man could never have any intereſt, that was neceſſitous. There was, however, a little circumſtance in his conduct, which contributed not a little to give the world, or at leaſt a circle of his acquaintance in it, ſuch an opinion of him. The caſe was this, the captain was a very nice œconomiſt, and tho' he was very willing to give his friends any aſſiſtance that might be drawn from his time or labour, yet he thought they had no right to his pocket, and therefore he was ſo punctual in ſetting down his expences, that a diſh of coffee did not eſcape him.

He was often rallied pretty ſeverely, for this over-ſtrained frugality, as ſome people called it; but this did not in the leaſt move him. He obſerved, that what were very trifles in themſelves, when added together, and brought into one man's expences, became worthy of notice, and that it was much better to mention ſuch things, and have them

them ſettled, then either to forbear doing people ſervice, or grudge thoſe ſervices when done, on the ſcore of thoſe little expences that attended them. To ſay the truth, tho' he was very nice in this point of money lent, or laid out, yet he expected no more from others, than he thought himſelf obliged to perform under the like circumſtances, perhaps not ſo much. When he firſt came over to *England*, his affairs were in a very bad poſture, and by ſoliciting at various places, in order to make them better, he ran himſelf conſiderably in debt, upon which he retired to a country village, lived upon half his half-pay, and diſcharged the debts he had contracted, before he attempted to puſh his way in the world, in the manner before-mentioned.

It was this diſpoſition, that gave him a conſtant and conſiderable credit, ſo that he always knew where to meet with the ſum of money he wanted upon any emergency, which he never failed to repay with intereſt at his time; and this was of more uſe to him than can be well expreſſed. His office at *Whitehall*, brought him into abundance of buſineſs, and the manner in which he diſcharged it, gained him a very large and general acquaintance, many of whom expreſſed a deſire to ſerve him, and were inclined to give him

their

their aſſiſtance, to put himſelf into another ſituation of life, wherein he might make a better figure, and find his account in it, at the ſame time.

THE method propoſed, was the procuring him to be put into the commiſſion of the peace for the county of *Middleſex* and liberty of *Weſtminſter*, which he was not very haſty in accepting. He knew very well, that there were many things with which a man ought to be throughly acquainted, who takes upon himſelf the office of a magiſtrate, of which he had an high opinion; and being naturally diſpoſed to diſcharge with great punctuality, whatever he underſtood to be his duty, he reſolved to employ ſome part of his time in making himſelf well acquainted with the nature of that office, and with the powers of a juſtice of peace, before he undertook to execute them. He was not long in acquiring theſe lights, and as ſoon as he had acquired them, the intereſt of his friends, and particularly colonel *Bladen* beforementioned, put him into a capacity of exerting them, by getting him made a juſtice in 1729.

SOON after which, he took a houſe in *Leiceſter-fields*, and by his activity, vigilance, and great attention, to whatever came before him, diſtinguiſhed himſelf

himſelf in that employment beyond many of thoſe who had been long in it; and as this raiſed his reputation, and made him taken notice of by ſeveral perſons of rank and figure, ſo it drew upon him alſo an extraordinary concourſe of company, as well for advice or curioſity, as to ſee perhaps if they could ſpy any faults in him; but that did not give him great concern, his ſpirit being ſuperior to every thing of this kind, which enabled him to paſs chearfully through a great deal of buſineſs, that to a man of another turn of mind, would have proved a very uneaſy, if not inſupportable burden.

The great caution he uſed in all his tranſactions, and the method he took to keep his affairs in order, ſoon diſtinguiſhed him in his office; and the readineſs and facility with which he entered into all the branches of it in a ſurpriſing ſhort ſpace of time, made him much taken notice of; and this drew upon him the envy of perſons who tho' they had been longer in that kind of buſineſs, yet found themſelves liable to miſtakes, flowing from different cauſes, by which they ſoon fell much beneath him in credit, and conſequently loſt a great part of the profits which they had formerly enjoyed. The reader will eaſily apprehend the perſons of whom I am ſpeaking, who are what the

vulgar call (and perhaps not improperly) *Trading Juſtices*; of whom it may not be amiſs to ſay ſomething before we proceed.

THEY are a ſort of people that have never ſtood in a very fair light, either with their ſuperiors or inferiors: by the former they are generally conſidered as low, needy, and mercenary tools, who ſubſiſt on their commiſſions, and may be put upon any thing by ſuch as have either power or intereſt ſufficient to affect them. On the other hand, they are hated and dreaded by the common people, who fancy they have far greater powers than they really have; who apply to them upon every trivial occaſion, to gratify their own ſpleen and malice againſt their neighbours; or being obnoxious to ſuch treatment from others, for they dread a warrant more than all things, and are as much afraid of being carried before *his worſhip*, as the people of *Paris* fear the *baſtile*, or the inhabitants of *Liſbon* the *inquiſition*.

SUCH people there have been for ages paſt, and very probably will be in thoſe that are to come, becauſe they are a kind of neceſſary evils; for though the part they act is low, and very frequently oppreſſive and injurious, yet if there were

were not ſuch little magiſtrates, the laws could not be well put in execution, or the common ſort of people kept within any bounds in regard to their ſuperiors, or to one another: beſides, whatever evils they do, flow chiefly from the bad habits of thoſe they have to do with, and theſe miſchiefs can never riſe to any conſiderable height, before they are met with and corrected by ſome or other of the ſuperior tribunals of juſtice; ſo that they are rather tolerated than authorized, and whenever their errors become flagrant in themſelves, or notorious in their nature, they ſeldom fail to meet with a quick and effectual cure.

THESE ſort of folks, we may readily conceive, had reaſon enough to be jealous of Mr. *De Veil*, who, though he did much of their kind of buſineſs, did it in another manner; ſo that though his office was very profitable, yet it was not liable to any ſcandal; on the contrary, he was not only exact in what he did himſelf, but (as they came in his way) rectified other peoples miſtakes, and was a great check upon ſuch as had nothing but intereſt in view, and conſidered juſtice in no other light, than as a commodity, by the vending of which they could make money.

It fell out in about a year after he began to act, that one Mr. *W*—— found himſelf hurt by Mr. *De Veil*'s refuſing to comply with an irregular act of his, and by his complaining of it to the Lord Chanceilor's ſecretary, his reſentment run ſo high, that he reſolved to take perſonal ſatisfaction of Mr. *De Veil*; in order to which he ſent for him from his own houſe to the *Leiceſter* coffee-houſe in *Leiceſter-fields*, and getting him into a room above ſtairs, drew his ſword upon him, inſulted him groſly, and at laſt wounded him dangerouſly, and perhaps might have gone ſtill further, if the noiſe had not brought company up ſtairs, which prevented him from executing the whole of his purpoſe.

The conduct of Mr. *De Veil* upon this occaſion was very calm and diſcreet. He told his brother juſtice, that diſputes between magiſtrates were to be regulated by the law, and not by the ſword; that he had put this diſpute into a proper method of being determined where it ought to be determined, and that when this was once over, if he ſtill thought himſelf aggrieved, he would readily give him any kind of ſatisfaction he ſhould then think fit to require. But this having no ſort of effect upon the perſon he had to deal with, who,

who, as we have before related, took his own way of revenging his quarrel, Mr. *De Veil* perſiſted alſo in his method, and had all the advantage over his antagoniſt in a judicial way that he could expect or deſire ; and as this affair made a great noiſe in the world, and came to be fully explained and examined in a ſuperior court of juſtice, it was of much ſervice to Mr. *De Veil*, and brought him to be conſidered as a perſon very capable of doing great ſervice in his ſtation, and of becoming ſuch a magiſtrate as in all times is much wanted, but was never more ſo than at that juncture, when a great ſpirit of corruption reigned, and bad people were become ſo inſolent, that it required great courage and preſence of mind, in ſuch as were called by their ſtations to put in execution the laws provided by the legiſlature, for ſuppreſſing and puniſhing ſuch infamous perſons.

As men ſeldom make any great progreſs in the world, who do not propoſe to themſelves ſome certain point, towards which they bend their ſteps, keep it conſtantly in view, and make it their ſole aim ; Mr. *De Veil* formed ſuch an object to himſelf, and never loſt ſight thereof till he found himſelf in poſſeſſion of it. The poſt he aimed at was the confidence of the court and miniſtry

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in his office as juſtice of peace; and to this he was moved by many motives; firſt, it gratified his ambition, he loved to be about great men, and to have an intereſt in them, which he believed could not be obtained any other way than by ſerving them. In the next place, he knew it would give him credit and power, for which he had alſo a very ſtrong appetite, and was never happier than when ſurrounded by a number of people whom he could influence by his nod. Laſtly, he had his profit in view; for though he was far enough from covetouſneſs, if we reſtrain that vice to the mere gathering and keeping of money, yet he had a ſtrong paſſion for acquiring it, that he might live in his own way, which was magnificent enough, and gratify his propenſity to pleaſures, which were very expenſive. His notion in this reſpect was very well founded, the methods he took to raiſe himſelf were well contrived and ſteadily proſecuted, and the ſucceſs that attended his endeavours perhaps exceeded even his hopes.

But before we proceed to a diſtinct relation of theſe, it may not be amiſs to inform the reader as to a point of hiſtory that is not very well underſtood, and that is, that ſuch a magiſtrate as this has never been wanting under any reign ſince that of Queen *Elizabeth*: In her time *Fleetwood*, who

who was Recorder of *London*, had this poſt, and held a regular correſpondence with the prime miniſter *Cecil*, to whom he was extremely uſeful. In the reign of King *James* it would be eaſy to point out ſeveral that had ſucceſſively this employment, but the moſt remarkable was one Sir *Francis Mitchell*, who was a *Middleſex* juſtice, and a creature of the duke of *Buckingham*'s, who ſupported him in many outragious acts of power, even againſt the Lord Chancellor *Bacon*, and the ſcandalous hiſtory of thoſe times does not ſtick to ſay, that the firſt difference between the chancellor and the duke aroſe about this man, whom ſince we have mentioned, it may perhaps give no offence to the reader, to be told, that in the opinion of ſome very intelligent perſons, who lived in thoſe times, this accident proved the chancellor's ruin, for he furniſhed ſome of his friends with matter for accuſing this *Middleſex* juſtice in parliament, where he was ſeverely puniſhed, and his patron was ſo much provoked thereby, that he ſoon after gave up the chancellor to a like proſecution, which brought him to diſgrace:

In the reign of King *Charles* II. the famous Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* was the court juſtice, and a very active and uſeful magiſtrate he was, diſplaying

playing in that capacity a degree of courage worthy of an old *Roman*; an inſtance of which, becauſe it is not commonly known, ſhall be ſet down here. On the breaking out of the great plague in 1666, there were peſt-houſes erected, into which ſuch as were ſeized with the diſtemper were carried, till either the diſeaſe killed, or (which did not very often happen) the doctors cured. It happened, that a fellow who had committed a great robbery and a very black murder, being purſued by the conſtable, took refuge in one of theſe peſt-houſes, and there thought to be ſecure. The conſtables, and thoſe that were with them, ſurrounded the place, and notice being ſent to Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*, he came thither in perſon, and did all he could to perſuade ſome of them to go in and bring the fellow out, but it was to no purpoſe; at laſt, when he found that neither perſuaſion nor threats would do any thing, the juſtice himſelf went in, made a ſtrict ſearch among the beds of the diſeaſed and dying people, dragged the criminal from under one of them, brought him out into the ſtreet, and put him into the hands of the officers of juſtice, and having made his mittimus, ſaw him fairly conducted to *Newgate*. It was owing to his being ſuch a magiſtrate, that *Tongue* and *Oates*, when they framed their firſt narrative of the popiſh

plot,

plot, made their application to him, which, as all the world knows, proved the occaſion of his death, which made ſo much noiſe, and is become a fact of conſequence enough to make a conſiderable figure even in our general hiſtories.

AMONG other ſucceſſors in the ſame reign, he had one who diſtinguiſhed himſelf very particularly, the perſon I mean was Sir *John Reresby*, a *Yorkſhire* baronet, of a good family, and conſiderable fortune, who was put into the commiſſion of the peace for *Middleſex*, on purpoſe to ſerve upon great occaſions, in deference to which the king did not think it below him, to give him his orders with his own mouth; of which, in his memoirs, we have the following very remarkable inſtance, in relation to the murder of Mr. *Thynn*, and the apprehending Count *Coningsmark*, which being partially as well as very imperfectly related by our hiſtorians, I will give you the whole in Sir *John Reresby*'s own words, who entered it thus in a very regular diary that he kept of all his proceedings.

" 1681. *Feb.* 12. At this time was perpetrated the moſt barbarous and audacious murder that had almoſt ever been heard of in *England*. Mr. *Thynn*, a gentleman of 9000*l. per annum*, and lately

 married

married to lady *Ogle*, who repenting herſelf of the match, fled from him into *Holland* before they were bedded, was ſet upon by three ruffians, who ſhot him as he was going along the ſtreet in his coach. This unhappy gentleman being much engaged in the duke of *Monmouth*'s cauſe, it was feared that party might put ſome violent conſtruction on this accident, the actors therein making their eſcape juſt for the time, and being unknown. I happened to be at court that evening, when the king hearing the news, ſeemed greatly concerned at it, not only for the horror of the action itſelf, which was ſhocking to his natural diſpoſition, but alſo for fear of the turns the anti-court party might give thereto. I left the court, and was juſt ſtepping into bed, when Mr. *Thynn*'s gentleman came to me to grant him a hue and cry, and immediately at his heels comes the duke of *Monmouth*'s page, to deſire me to come to him at Mr. *Thynn*'s lodgings, ſending his coach for me, which I made uſe of accordingly. I there found his grace ſurrounded with ſeveral lords and gentlemen, Mr. *Thynn*'s friends, and Mr. *Thynn* himſelf mortally wounded with five ſhot from a blunderbuſs. I on the ſpot granted ſeveral warrants againſt perſons ſuſpected to have had a hand therein, and that night got ſome intelligence concerning the actors themſelves. At

length,

length, by the information of a chairman, who had carried one of the ruffians from his lodgings at *Westminster* to the *Black Bull* there to take horse, and by means of a looſe woman who uſed to viſit the ſame perſon, the conſtables found out the place of his abode, and there took his man, by nation a *Sweed*, who being brought before me, confeſſed himſelf a ſervant to a *German* captain, who had told him he had a quarrel with Mr. *Thynn*, and had often ordered him to watch his coach, and that particularly that day the captain no ſooner underſtood the coach to be gone by, than he booted himſelf, and with two others, a *Swediſh* lieutenant and a *Pole*, went on horſeback, as he ſuppoſed, in queſt of Mr. *Thynn*.

Feb. 13. By the ſame ſervant I alſo underſtood where poſſibly the captain and his two companions were to be found, and having with the duke of *Monmouth*, lord *Mordaunt*, and others, ſearched ſeveral houſes, as he directed us, till ſix in the morning, and having been in cloſe purſuit all night, I perſonally took the captain in the houſe of a *Swediſh* doctor in *Leiceſter-fields*. I went firſt into his room, followed by lord *Mordaunt*, where I found him in bed, with his ſword at ſome diſtance from him on the table: his weapon I in the firſt place ſecured, and then his perſon, commit-

ting him to two conſtables. I wondered he ſhould make ſo tame a ſubmiſſion, for he was certainly a man of great courage, and appeared quite unconcerned from the very beginning, tho' he was very certain he ſhould be found the chief actor in the tragedy. This gentleman had not long before commanded the forlorn hope at the ſiege at *Mons*, when but two beſides himſelf, of fifty under his command, eſcaped with life, and in conſideration of this ſervice, the prince of *Orange* made him a lieutenant of his guards, and in regard for the ſame, the king of *Sweden* gave him a troop of horſe: but to inſiſt no farther on this, his two accomplices alſo were taken, and brought to my houſe, where, before I could finiſh the ſeveral examinations I had to go through, the king ſent for me to attend him in council for that purpoſe with the priſoners and papers. His majeſty ordered me to give him an account of the proceedings hitherto, as well with regard to the apprehending the priſoners, as their examination, and then examined them himſelf, and when the council roſe, ordered me to put every thing into writing, and in form, againſt the trial, which took me up a great part of the day, tho' I had got one of the clerks of the council, and another juſtice of the peace, to aſſiſt me, both for the ſake of diſpatch, and of my own ſecurity the ni-

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cety of the affair requiring it, as will in the ſequel appear.

Feb. 15. The council met again, among other things to examine the governour of young count *Coningsmark*, a young gentleman then in Mr. *Foubert*'s academy in *London*, and ſuppoſed to be privy to the murder. Upon this occaſion the king ſent for me to attend in council, where the ſaid governour confeſſing, that the eldeſt count *Coningsmark*, who had been in *England* ſome months before, and made his addreſſes to the lady who ſo unfortunately married Mr. *Thynn*, arrived *incognito* ten days before the ſaid murder, and lay diſguiſed till it was committed, gave great cauſe to ſuſpect that the count was at the bottom of this bloody affair, and his majeſty ordered me thereupon to go and ſearch his lodgings, which I did with two conſtables, but the bird was flown; he went away betimes in the morning of the day after the deed was perpetrated, of which I immediately gave the king an account. I ſeveral times afterwards attended on the king, both in private and in council, from time to time, to give him information as freſh matter occurred or appeared; and upon the whole it was diſcovered, partly by the confeſſion of the parties concerned, and partly by the information of others, that the

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German captain had been for eight years an intimate with count *Coningsmark*, one of the greateſt men in the kingdom of *Sweden*, his uncle being at that time governour of *Pomerania*, and near upon marrying the king's aunt; and moreover, that during the time he was in *England*, before he had made his addreſſes to lady *Ogle*, the only daughter and heireſs of the earl of *Northumberland*, who had been married to the deceaſed Mr. *Thynn*, and that the ſaid count had reſented ſomething as an affront from Mr. *Thynn*: that the captain, moved thereto out of pure friendſhip to the count, tho' not at all with his privity as pretended, had determined himſelf to revenge his cauſe, and that in conſequence of ſuch his reſolution the murder happened. It appeared alſo, that ſuch his cruel deſign was furthered by the aſſiſtance of the *Swediſh* lieutenant and the *Pole*, who had been by him obliged to diſcharge the blunderbuſs into the coach. I was extremely glad, that in this whole buſineſs there was no *Engliſh* perſon, directly or indirectly concerned, for the fanatics had buzzed it about, that the deſign was chiefly againſt the duke of *Monmouth*, ſo that I had the king's thanks more than once, the thanks of my lord *Hallifax*, and ſeveral others, for my diligence in tracing out the true ſprings and motives of this horrid action, as well as the actors themſelves.

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The duke of *Monmouth* had been out of the coach above an hour, and by the confeſſion of the criminals, I found they were not to have made the attempt if his grace had been with Mr. *Thynn*; mean while it was ſuſpected, that count *Coningsmark* was ſtill in the kingdom, and ſearch being made after him, he was met with alone in diſguiſe at *Graveſend*, by a ſervant of the duke of *Monmouth*'s, juſt as he was ſtepping out of a ſculler, intending the very next day to embark on board a *Swediſh* ſhip. Being brought up to town, the king immediately called an extraordinary council to examine him. I was preſent upon this occaſion, and obſerved, that he appeared before the king with all the aſſurance imaginable. He was a fine perſon of a man, and I think his hair was the longeſt I ever ſaw. He was very quick of parts, but his examination was very ſuperficial, for which reaſon he was by the king and council ordered to be the ſame day examined by the lord chief juſtice, the attorney general, and myſelf; but he confeſſed nothing of the murder, pretending the reaſon why he lay at this time concealed to be, that he was then under cure for a venereal diſaſter, and did not care to appear in public till the courſe of his preſcriptions was over; and that his going away in diſguiſe, after the fact was committed, was by

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the advice of friends, who told him, it would reflect on him ſhould it be known he was in *England* when an intimate of his laboured under ſo violent a ſuſpicion of having committed ſo black a deed; and that he endeavoured to make his eſcape, well knowing how far the laws of the land might, for that very reaſon, involve him in the guilt. [*Feb.* 21.] But being at the king's couchee the night after, I perceived, by his majeſty's diſcourſe, that he was willing the count ſhould get off.

Feb. 26. A few days afterwards Monſ. *Foubert*, who kept the academy in *London*, came and deſired me to put him in a way how to ſave count *Coningsmark*'s life, inſinuating to me, that as he was a man of vaſt fortune, he could not make a better uſe of it, than to ſupport his own innocence, and ſhield himſelf from the edge of the law in a ſtrange country. I told him, that if the count was really innocent, the law would naturally acquit him, as much though a foreigner, as if he was a native; but that he ought to be cautious, how he made any offers to pervert juſtice, for that it were to make all men of honour his enemies, inſtead of gaining them to be his friends. This was one of the firſt bribes of value

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ever offered to me, which I might have accepted without any danger of diſcovery, and without doing much for it: But my opinion has always been, that what is ſo acquired, is no addition to our ſtore, but rather the cauſe of its waſte; according to the ſaying, *Male parta male delabuntur*: I therefore rejected this now, as I had others before, and as I hope I ſhall always do for the time to come.

Bills being found at *Hick's-Hall* againſt the three murderers of Mr. *Thynn* as principals, and againſt the count, as acceſſary; they the next day made their appearance at the *Old-Bailey*, where after a trial which laſted from nine in the morning, to five in the afternoon, and a very vigorous proſecution on the part of Mr. *Thynn*'s relations, the three were brought in guilty as principals, and the count by the ſame jury acquitted, as not acceſſary, it being *per meditatem linguæ*, according to the privilege of ſtrangers. I was the firſt that carried the news of this to the king, who ſeemed to be not at all diſpleaſed at it; but the duke of *Monmouth*'s party, who all appeared to add weight to the proſecution, were extremely diſſatisfied that the Count had ſo eſcaped.

March 10. The captain and the other two

his accomplices in the murder of Mr. *Thynn*, were purſuant to their ſentence hanged in the Street, where they had perpetrated the crime. The captain died without any the leaſt ſymptom of fear, or offering at the leaſt glance of reflection on Count *Coningsmark*; and ſeeing me in my coach, as he paſſed by in the cart, he made a bow to me, with the moſt ſteady countenance, as he did to ſeveral of the ſpectators he knew, before he was turn'd off; in ſhort, his whole carriage from the firſt moment he was apprehended, to the laſt that he reſign'd his breath, ſavoured much of gallantry, but not at all of religion."

But to return to Mr. *De Veil*, he ſaw very plainly, that to carry his point, and to become ſuperior to others in his ſtation, it was neceſſary for him to take more than ordinary pains; and in this, he was indefatigable, nor did he make any difficulty of expoſing his perſon when it was neceſſary, in order to ſee his warrants executed, or to come at the bottom of remarkable villanies by ſeveral, and thoſe ſometimes long and tedious examinations. By theſe methods, by being continually in buſineſs, and by keeping very correct accounts of whatever paſſed before him, he came to make ſuch diſcoveries, as alarmed one

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of the largeſt, and moſt deſperate gangs, that ever infeſted this, or any other country. It was compoſed of perſons of all profeſſions, many of whom lived in tollerable credit, or at leaſt were houſe-keepers, and were conſequently in a condition to appear and become bail for their companions, when any of them fell into the hands of juſtice; ſome of them were retainers to the law, who underſtood all the dark arts that qualified *Newgate* ſolicitors, and theſe fellows provided and managed every thing, and that too with ſuch dexterity, that there was nothing they could not prove, or diſprove upon very ſhort notice. It is true indeed, their faces became ſoon known in *Weſtminſter-Hall*, where ſuch kind of people are quickly found out, and a proper value ſet upon their teſtimonies; but notwitſtanding this, their numbers were ſo great, and the craft of thoſe who managed them ſo conſummate, that they did much miſchief, and raiſed a prodigious terror.

Mr. *De Veil* had made pretty deep diſcoveries in relation to ſeveral of theſe people, and knowing that nothing could more effectually anſwer his purpoſe, than bringing under the laſh of the law, and ſuppreſſing ſo dangerous and infamous a confederacy, he left no method untried, to gain a diſtinct account of their proceedings. But before

his deſign was ripe for excution, theſe deſperate ruffians began to ſuſpect his intention, and believing there was no way to eſcape deſtruction themſelves, but by deſtroying him, they without any difficulty reſolved upon that, and as ſoon as they had reſolved on it, attempted to put it in execution. With this view, they poſted themſelves for ſeveral nights, in a convenient place in *Leiceſter-fields*, in hopes of meeting him, either as he went out, or came back to his own houſe, which if they had done, they determined to ſhoot him.

All their attempts however of this kind miſcarried; and as ſuch wretches are naturally cowards, ſo one of them, who was not the leaſt infamous of the gang, was ſo frighted by the ſenſe of his own danger, that he fell ſick, and growing then fuller of apprehenſions, reſolved at laſt to ſave himſelf if it was poſſible, by making a full confeſſion to the perſon he ſo much feared; accordingly he found means to give notice to Juſtice *De Veil*, or as he was then commonly ſtiled Colonel *De Veil*, from his commiſſion of lieutenant colonel in the militia: and the colonel went to him, though he had been informed, that ſome wicked people had deſigns againſt his life. This was in the month of *October*, 1735, the name of this evidence was *Julian Brown*, and he was certainly a perſon of as bad a character as could well

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be found; but the account he gave, and was attended with ſo many circumſtances, and thoſe circumſtances were ſo probable, that ſeveral perſons were taken up. The principal fact upon which his evidence turned, was the robbery of one Doctor *Lancaſter* a Clergyman, on the 11th of *June* preceding, for which one *Mac Creigh*, or *Maccray* had been tryed and acquitted by dint of perjury; this very *Julian Brown* being one of his witneſſes, and ſwearing falſly at his trial. According to the account he now gave, himſelf, one *Wreathock* an attorney, and five more were concerned in this robbery, for which they were tried at the *Old-Bailey* and convicted, but obtained mercy, and were tranſported for life. *Maccray* had been executed *Auguſt* 21ſt, 1735, at *Kennington-common* in *Surry*, for another robbery, and by this means the greateſt part of the gang were detected, brought to juſtice or diſperſed. There were ſome doubts raiſed as to the robbery founded chiefly on this, that *Wreathock*, tho' a very bad man, and ſprung from the dregs of the people, had notwithſtanding acquired an eſtate of two or three hundred pounds a year, and it was thought ſtrange, that in ſuch circumſtances he ſhould hazard his life upon the highway. But be that as it would, it appeared clearly and inconteſtably at his trial, that he was very deeply engaged with theſe peo-

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ple, and that he was looked upon as their head or chief, that he had managed the whole ſcene of perjury, by which *Maccray* came off in *Middleſex*, and a very bold attempt of the ſame nature, by which it was endeavoured to get him acquitted likewiſe in *Surry*, though that miſcarried. The detecting this deep laid ſcene of villany, bringing the principal authors of it to juſtice, and obliging all the reſt to diſperſe, as it was entirely owing to the vigilance and ſpirit of Colonel *De Veil*, who thereby did great ſervice to his country, ſo it recommended him to the notice and protection of the miniſtry, who thought it very requiſite to diſtinguiſh a magiſtrate capable of acting in ſuch a manner; though they knew well enough at the ſame time, that ſome things in his conduct were far enough from being commendable.

The putting penal laws in execution, has been always eſteemed one of the moſt unpleaſant and troubleſome parts of a juſtice's office; but Colonel *De Veil* knew however, that it was neceſſary, and therefore he had a large ſhare, in reſpect to that which was made in the year 1736, for regulating the ſale of ſpirituous liquors, than which there never paſſed a law, that gave greater countenance to informers, or which conſequently was attended with more clamour. It is beyond a queſtion, that the motives upon which the law was made, were in themſelves

themſelves right, and the intention of the legiſla-ture very juſt and reaſonable; but the miſchiefs this law was intended to remedy, had taken ſuch deep root, and the practice of drinking was be-come ſo general among the common people, that is certainly required great ſkill and caution to have eradicated it, which this act was ſo far from doing, that it really heightened the evil by the ad-dition of many others, as dangerous and deteſta-ble; for on the one hand, it let looſe a crew of deſperate and wicked people who turn'd informers merely for bread; and on the other, it expoſed numbers of unhappy people, who before the ſell-ing of ſpirituous liquors by retail became a crime, had got a livelihood thereby, to be diſtreſſed, beggared, and ſent to priſon. So that inſtead of ſuppreſſing drunkenneſs and debauchery, which without doubt was the true meaning of the law, it proved an encouragement to perjury, and gave an opening to a kind of legal oppreſſion, which quickly filled the *Bridewells* ſo full, and brought ſuch numbers upon the pariſhes, that it was at laſt found neceſſary to ſoften the ſeverity of this act of parliament, by becoming relax in the ex-ecution of it. Before things took this turn, co-lonel *De Veil*, who was now removed from *Lei-ceſter-fields* to *Thrift-Street*, *Soho*e, ran a great ha-zard of being made a victim to that ſpirit of fury

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and reſentment, with which the mob were filled, even againſt ſuch as were obliged by their offices to receive informations, and to puniſh offenders upon conviction.

There was ſcarce a day paſſed, without the moſt flagrant riots upon this occaſion; not only to the danger of the juſtice, but to the annoyance and diſturbance of the whole neighbourhood. Colonel *De Veil* was ſenſible of this, but at the ſame time, he could not help being provoked at it, and the populace having carried this once ſo far, as to remain for a long time in great crouds about his houſe, he thought it requiſite to read the proclamation againſt riots, in order to diſperſe them; making uſe of the moſt penal of all our laws, to enforce the execution of one, that was become the moſt invidious. This could certainly be pleaſing to him, but at the ſame time it muſt be owned, he found it neceſſary, the rather, becauſe two of the informers had taken ſhelter in his houſe; whom he could not turn out without ſacrificing their lives, or keep them without hazarding his own.

In this ſituation he ſent for aſſiſtance, which was very ſoon furniſhed him, as it ought to be, to every civil magiſtrate under ſuch circumſtances; and

and the perſon who headed the mob was ſeized and committed to *Newgate*. Colonel *De Veil*, thought it very neceſſary he ſhould be proſecuted upon the ſtatute, though it is very probable, that he did not deſire the man's blood; but there were other people of a very different opinion, particularly, the ſollicitor of the treaſury, who was a perſon well heard by the miniſter, and who underſtood his buſineſs as well as any man that ever filled that ſtation. He thought that as the *Ginn-Act* was in the judgment of moſt people, a very ſevere law, it would look like doubling the ſeverity of it, to make it become the ſubject of a capital proſecution, and therefore he was againſt it. But the Colonel took up the matter ſo warmly, and inſiſted ſo much upon the continual danger he was in if ſome ſtop was not put to ſuch kind of tumults, that a proſecution was order'd, which was carried on with effect; ſo that on *Wedneſday* the 10th, of *May*, 1738, *Roger Allen*, was brought to his tryal before the court of *King*'s-*Bench* at *Weſtminſter*, for remaining at the head of a mob, three hours after the proclamation was read, encouraging them to pull down the Colonel's houſe, and to murder two informers that had taken ſhelter there, on the 23d, of *January* preceding.

The tryal laſted ſix hours, the facts were inconteſtably proved, and the defence the priſoner

made, or rather which was made for him was, that at certain times he was out of his right mind, and of this ſuch evidence was given, as the jury found him *Not Guilty*. There was a prodigious mob that waited the event, as well in *Weſtminſter Hall*, as in the *Palace-yards*, who ſet up an univerſal huzza upon his being acquitted; and as ſoon as he was diſcharged ſat him upon their heads and carried him off in triumph. There was a very remarkable circumſtance attended this affair, which is ſo ſtrong a characteriſtic of the ſpirit of the *Britiſh* populace, that I cannot paſs it over in ſilence. When the crowd had carried their friend *Roger* out of the hall, and had placed him in a very conſpicuous part of *Old-Palace-Yard*, he took it in his head to make a ſpeech in theſe very words. " Gentlemen, I thank you kindly for " this honour, but the great liberty of mobbing " a juſtice now and then, and my own life had " been certainly loſt, if I had not had *Wit* enough " to prove my ſelf a *Fool*".

As misfortunes ſeldom come alone, ſo this defeat was very ſoon followed by another. Some extraordinary liberties that had been taken with great characters upon the ſtage, had occaſioned a law for reſtraining it; which though it could not be called unreaſonable, was very far from being well reliſhed by the public. It was foreſeen that this

reſtraint

reſtraint would be fatal to that diverſion, which of all others, had been moſt encouraged in all polite nations; and that what was only intended to reach perſonal abuſe, would be extended to general ſatyr. This foreſight has been but too well juſtified by experience, for new-plays have been ever ſince ſo void of taſte and ſpirit, as well as ſalt and fire, that ſcarce any of them have been able to hold out three nights. But to come to the point,

In the month of *October* following, there came over a ſett of *French* players, who by the intereſt of ſome perſons of quality, procured a licenſe to act comedies in their own language in the *Hay-market*; for which printed bills being ſtuck up in all parts of the town, with the words By Authority in over-grown capitals; this provoked to the laſt degree, the wits that were already enough out of humour; they could not bear that while *Engliſh* ſenſe was exciſed, *French* tinſel ſhould be imported with impunity; and therefore threw out broad hints, that upon this occaſion, *the town* would interpoſe their Authority, in order to reform an abuſe tolerated by the ſuperior powers.

I ſhall not take upon me to enquire who *the Town* is, what their rights are, or whether they interpoſed with juſtice upon this occaſion, becauſe theſe are points, the diſcuſſion of which, would lead

me a great way from my ſubject; and becauſe thoſe who have a mind to ſee them argued, may very eaſily ſatisfy their curioſity, by having recourſe to the literary records of thoſe times; ſuch as the *Hiſtorical Regiſter*, and the *Magazines*. It is enough for my purpoſe, that the Colonel thought proper upon this occaſion, to make his appearance at the theatre, in hopes that his preſence might ſupport *the authority* mentioned in the bills. But *the town* was not diſpoſed to pay any ſuch reſpect to the *juſtice*; and the *French* players no ſooner made their appearance, but they were ſaluted not only with hiſſes and cat-calls, but with oranges, apples, and all the uſual artillery of the pit. The poor devils were ſtrangely amazed at a reception ſo intirely *Engliſh*, and therefore retired in great diſorder behind the ſcenes: upon this, forth ſtood the Colonel, and began an oration againſt what he was pleaſed to call *Bear-garden* behaviour; he was anſwered by a wit, whoſe chriſtian name if I remember right, was *Paul*, and ſo concluſively, that in point of argument it was a plain defeat. The Colonel than began to talk in the language of power, which is always out of ſeaſon, when not immediately backed by ſuperior force. The people in the pit thought they had power too, and began to exert it without farther ceremony, by pulling up benches and forms, and throwing all things into confuſion, and it was in this temper of mind the

company

company parted, but not before the Colonel had very unluckily threatned to employ his old weapon the *Proclamation* againſt *riots*.

This affair made a prodigious noiſe, all the coffee-houſes rung with it, the papers were filled with it, and the caſe of the *French*-players became with ſome folks a point of law, and with others a point of ſtate; but thoſe for whom the Colonel had taken all this trouble, where not diſpoſed to carry things to extremities, they very wiſely judged that ſupporting players of any ſort, was much beneath the dignity of perſons of their rank; that *French*-players made this more unworthy, and more unpopular, and that the conſequences which might attend it, were not to be risked upon ſo triffling an occaſion. Upon theſe motives, the matter was let drop, and the Colonel was obliged to employ his pen to defend him againſt that torrent of abuſe; which in ſuch caſes, never fails to diſcharge itſelf upon any ſingle man, who is hardy enough to ſet up his private ſentiments, againſt thoſe of *the town*.

It would acquire a volume, and that perhaps of a pretty large ſize, to enter into the particulars of the Colonel's employments as a magiſtrate at this ſeaſon; for notwithſtanding theſe little diſappointments, he was now in the height of his glory,

and

and in all emergencies where a man in his capacity could be uſeful, no other man was thought of; he was the oracle of the veſtry, and though he did not preſide, all the court was paid to him at the quarter-ſeſſions; he ſat by the judge at the *Old-Bailey*, and ſat like a judge at his own office, which was now transferred to *Bow-ſtreet*, *Covent-garden*, where it continued for ſeveral years. But in the midſt of ſuch a variety of events which might confound a much abler hiſtorian than I take myſelf to be, I ſhall make choice of ſome few, which ſeem to me to deſerve more particularly the reader's notice.

There was no quality by which colonel *De Veil* was more diſtinguiſhed than his ſagacity, except his diligence if he was once furniſhed with a few hints, he knew how to form them into a clue, which lead him through all the labyrinth's of iniquity; and when once he laid hold of this clue, he never parted with it till he brought the whole diſcovery to the view of the public. An extraordinary inſtance of this occurred in the caſe of one Mr. *Drew* an attorney in *Suffolk*, at a place call'd *Long-Melford*, who on the 31ſt, of *January*, 1740, was ſhot dead upon opening his own door, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night. An accidental miſtake in the direction of a letter, which was intended for this gentleman's ſon Mr.

Charles

Charles Drew, and which came to the hands of a name-ſake of his an attorney, was what gave the firſt light as to the author of this barbarous fact; and upon an application to Colonel *De Veil*, Mr. *Charles Drew* who was come up to town, had thrown off his mourning put on laced cloaths, and aſſumed the name of *Thomas Roberts*, was taken at a bagnio in *Leiceſter-fields*, kept by one *Eaſtmead*, and brought to the Colonel's houſe, where upon a very ſhort examination, there was ſufficient cauſe appeared for his commitment to *Newgate*; and the Colonel purſued the hints he had acquired ſo ſteddily, that he brought the whole affair to light; and going down himſelf to the enſuing aſſizes at *Bury*, which were held before Mr. Juſtice *Page*, on the 20th, of *March* following, the priſoner was there convicted upon very full evidence, of his being the perſon that with his own hands diſcharged the piece that killed his father. Upon the 9th, of *Aprit* he was according to his ſentence executed at St. *Edmond's-Bury*, and died in all the horrors, with which ſuch a cruel and unnatural crime muſt be neceſſarily attended.

I have the rather mentioned this, becauſe in the bringing ſo heinous an offender to juſtice, the Colonel went intirely out of the ordinary road, as having done all that he was obliged to do by committing him to *Newgate*; which ſhows how much

ſervice

ſervice men of his temper actually render their country; though many people perhaps might think his diligence in this reſpect, rather a work of ſuperregation, who it is not my buſineſs to anſwer.

There is one ſingular advantage that attends the office of an acting juſtice of peace, which is, that if he is a vigilant and uſeful magiſtrate, ſuch frequent opportunities offer themſelves for exerting his abilities, as keeps the public in conſtant remembrance of, and attention to the ſervices he performs; ſo that it is impoſſible his merit ſhould be hid, or paſs for any length of time unrewarded. Colonel *De Veil*, was a very clear example of this, for no ſooner had he performed one remarkable exploit in his judicial capacity, and the world had time to examine and reflect upon it, but another fell in his way, of as great a conſequence to his reputation. As for inſtance, the very next year after he had brought *Drew* to juſtice, whoſe crime was a parricide, had raiſed the horror of the thinking part of the world; he became no leſs inſtrumental in detecting another black affair, which from a variety of circumſtances attending it, alarmed the town extremely.

Mr. *Penny* a gentleman of a very good family much advanced in years, eaſy in his fortune; at

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the time of his death Principal of *Clement*'s-*Inn*, and *Deputy Pay-maſter* of the penſions ; had lived long in the enjoyment of the pleaſures of a ſingle and independant life. He ſpent his days in buſineſs, his evenings with his friends; he went ſometimes into the country, and had nothing elſe in view but making the decline of life as comfortable as poſſible. This gentleman had a ſervant whoſe name was *James Hall*, a fellow of a ſurly diſpoſition, and of a very cloudy aſpect; he had lived with him between ſix and ſeven years, and having of late addicted himſelf to the keeping of company, which was in ſome meaſure owing to having too much time left upon his hands had run into debt; and finding himſelf preſſed by his creditors, entertained thoughts of freeing himſelf from his difficulties, by murdering and robbing his maſter.

It is a very juſt and true obſervation, no man becomes exceſſively wicked all at once, it was ſome time before this wretch, notwithſtanding his natural temper was ſoure and cruel enough, could bring himſelf up to that pitch of barbarous reſolution, requiſite to ſo foul a crime. It is alſo very remarkable, that while theſe notions where rowling in his brains, his looks and behaviour were ſo much altered, that his maſter took notice of it, and often expreſſed to his friends an apprehenſion of this fellow, and a deſire to be rid of him ; which how-

ever, either thro' indolence, or from ſome other latent cauſe he did not put in execution: and as he was a reſerved man with whom his acquaintance could not take much liberty, he was not preſſed as he ought to have been, to diſcharge him immediately, and thereby made himſelf eaſy. The firſt ſtep that *Hall* took towards accompliſhing his deſign, was providing himſelf with a ſhort oaken ſtick, that had a large knob to it, with which he intended to knock his maſter down, and kill him without effuſion of blood. This ſtick he put under his maſter's bed, deferring from time to time the execution of his deteſtable project; rather from the apprehenſion of being himſelf detected and puniſhed, than out of any tenderneſs for one, with whom he had lived ſome years, whoſe ſervice had been very profitable to him, and to whom in other reſpects, he was under great obligations.

At laſt, finding himſelf more and more preſſed, he became deſperate, and on *Wedneſday* the 1ſt, of *June*, 1741, in the evening as his maſter ſat on the bed-ſide undreſſing himſelf, he drew his weapon from under the bed on the oppoſite ſide, and being behind his maſter, ſtruck him ſuch a blow as ſtunned him; he afterwards diſpatch'd him with repeated ſtrokes in the ſame manner, then very carefully undreſſed him, and cut his throat with a penknife, tho' he was dead before, in which his

cunning

cunning failed him; yet he acted with great precaution in filling two chamber-pots with the blood, and mixing it with water to prevent its coagulating, and then threw it down the sink. He stripped the body next, and having rowled his waistcoat about his masters head, stripped himself also stark naked, that no blood might fall upon his cloaths, carried the body to the bog-house and threw it down; his master's cloaths and shirt he disposed of in another place; then came and undressed himself, opened his master's scrutores to riffle them, and afterwards put every thing into as good order as he could.

The next morning he told the woman who attended the chamber, that his master was gone out of town, and had directed his rooms to be wash'd that they might be dry against his return, which was accordingly done. With all this precaution, he had the imprudence to make up a bundle, in which amongst other things, was his master's green purse with thirty six guineas, which he left with his Taylor: but to prevent any suspicion, he remained about the chambers as usual, and affected great concern upon his master's being missing. It was not many days before his master's nephew an eminent and worthy tradesman in *Fleet-street*, began to make enquiry after his Uncle, and Dean *Penny* his Brother came to town upon the occasi-

on; when after ſome conſultation, it was reſolved to take up this *Hall*, notwithſtanding that he had never abſconded, or ſhewn himſelf under any apprehenſion, but on the contrary, ſeemed very buſy in looking for, and enquiring after his maſter.

Upon his being carried before Colonel *De Veil*, he behaved very reſolutely, and with ſome inſolence; but the colonel being uſed to ſuch people, examined him ſo cloſely, that he very ſoon fell into confuſion, and then became ſullen, and would anſwer no queſtions that where asked him. The colonel committed him to the *Gate-houſe*, and at the ſame time told the relations of the deceas'd, that if they would cauſe the bog-houſe at *Clement*'s-*Inn* to be ſearched, he made no doubt but they would find the body of the late unfortunate Mr. *Penny*. This was accordingly done, and the body found: the Taylor alſo made a diſcovery of the effects that were depoſited with him, which afforded ſuch light into the affair, that *Hall* having in vain made a deſperate attempt to eſcape out of *Newgate*; began to feel ſome remorſe, and ſending for one who had been formerly his fellow-ſervant, he made a full diſcovery: and at the enſuing ſeſſions at the *Old-Bailey*, pleaded *guilty* to the indictment, received ſentence of death, and was executed on *Monday*, *September* 14, at the end of *Catherine-ſtreet* in the *Strand*, and was afterwards

hung

hung in chains at *Shepherd's-Buſh*, as is uſual in ſuch Inſtances of barbarity.

It is worth obſervation, that this fellow got very little by ſo cruel and ſo unnatural an action, and it will be found that this generally happens, ſo that if perſons under ſuch temptations, would but reflect a little on the fate of others, who have given way to them, they might eaſily drive ſuch villanous thoughts out of their heads; for how little regard ſoever men may have for the property of others, or tenderneſs for their perſons, yet they have generally ſpeaking, concern enough about themſelves, and would not willingly run head-long upon an infamous death, and almoſt certain damnation, without any proſpect of profit; 'nay, even ſuppoſing it poſſible to enjoy what was ſo gotten with any quiet of mind.

The profligate diſcourſes that are become ſo common in all public-houſes, where there is generally ſpeaking a prating fellow or two, who ſet up for oracles, either in favour of enthuſiaſm, or infidelity, are public nuſances, and have terrible operations upon weak minds and bad hearts. For enthuſiaſm confounds men's underſtandings, gives them falſe lights, and frequently leads them to commit the worſt actions, without any bad intention. On the other hand, infidelity leaves men with-

without any guide at all, except their appetites; and it is to the prevailing of this ridiculous notion, that we chiefly owe that corruption which is the ſcandal of the preſent times. When people loſe all regard for religion, they ſoon loſe all principles, and to this it is owing, that ſo little *honour* is to be found among the *great*, and ſo little *honeſty* among the *vulgar*. But to return to Colonel *De Veil*.

His natural ſagacity, aſſiſted by his experience, enabled him to make moſt ſurprizing diſcoveries; he knew ſo well how to throw thoſe he examined into confuſion, and was ſo able to catch up their unguarded expreſſions, to piece together broken hints, and ſometimes by feigning to know all, put theſe wretches upon detecting themſelves, by juſtifying againſt what he knew to be falſe, that he was very rarely deceived. Indeed it was amazing upon what ſlight grounds he would enter into the ſecret of the darkeſt tranſactions.

There was a fellow brought before him once, upon ſuſpicion of ſtealing a great quantity of plate out of an eating-houſe in *Whites-Alley*, *Chancery-Lane*. He ſteadily denied knowing any thing of the matter, and there was no colour of proof, for the only circumſtance ſuggeſted was, that he had paſſed oftner than uſual through the houſe to

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the billiard-table: The Colonel ſaw plainly that this would not juſtify a commitment, and therefore leaving of his examination, after hearing that a lock was picked to come at the things; he diſcourſed of indifferent matters to ſome people that were in the room, and then turning ſuddenly upon the criminal, asked him if he could not lend him a knife. The man put his hand in his pocket and gave the juſtice his penknife, who obſerveing the point of it broken, bid the conſtable and the man of the houſe go home and ſearch the place from which the plate was taken, where they found the point of the knife; and upon a promiſe that he ſhould be proſecuted only for a ſingle felony, the fellow confeſſed the fact, and named a *Pawnbroker*, to whom he had diſpoſed of the plate, which brought him into the ſcrape, and proved his ruin.

Many inſtances of the ſame kind might be given, ſuch as detecting the great robbery committed at *Bath*, by an unfortunate *French* adventurer, that by an ill-run at play, was forced into a new road of thieving, which brought him within ſight of the gallows, from which he eſcaped by dying in priſon. The colonel was alſo very uſeful in detecting frauds, and was frequently conſulted in difficult caſes by perſons of great diſtinction; and as it is very natural for men to value them-

themſelves upon their talents; ſo it cannot be denied, that the ſucceſs of colonel *De Veil* made him not a little vain, but even this foible of his, was advantageous to the public, as it induced him to do many things from a deſire of ſhowing his dexterity, from which he might otherwiſe have excuſed himſelf, as having no very cloſe relation to the duties of his office.

One might be tempted to digreſs a little upon this occaſion, to ſhow that the follies and weakneſſes of mankind, are frequently as beneficial to ſociety as their virtues. To ſay the truth, the diverſity of follies which we ſee in the world, form a kind of balance to each other, and hinder them how pernicious ſoever to individuals, from being fatal to the public. Thus the extravagancy of miſers heirs, preſently diffuſes thoſe immenſe ſums, that if the paſſion of hoarding were hereditary would remain for ever locked up, and a ſtrong turn for pleaſure, very often takes off from that keenneſs of parts, which otherwiſe might be fatal to ſociety. Nay, the very notion of acquiring, or maintaining a character in the world, ſhall very frequently produce the ſame effects, as the beſt principles would have done; and therefore though vanity be evident a weakneſs, yet it is among the number of thoſe weakneſſes, that perhaps it is beſt not to diſcourage; for provided

things

things be well done, it is not always neceſſary to enquire narrowly into the motives upon which they are done.

The witty Earl of *Dorſet*, when he was reproved for fighting a very idle duel, and was told he might have declined it without any danger of being cenſured by men of honour; anſwered, with great ſpirit, That may be very true, but a man who refuſed to fight, would never have been well with the maids of honour; and if a man of ſenſe will riſk his life upon ſo weak a principle, we need not wonder that men of inferior parts, are carried to great actions by very light inducements.

In matters of greater importance, and where his character was really at ſtake, the colonel acted ſometimes with extraordinary circumſpection, and in a manner that might afford juſt grounds for imitation to ſome of his brethren. In reference to the famous *Weſtminſter* election preceeding the laſt parliament, he ſhowed himſelf a great politician. His intereſt and his gratitude obliged him to take a larger ſhare in that tranſaction, than was in all probability agreeable to his inclinations; and though this was attended with as much popular clamour and mob reſentment, as any thing of that kind could be, yet he bore it with the utmoſt patience, and made his court to the people in

power, by ſtanding all the abuſe that popular rage could excite, or popular language could expreſs.

Yet when things came cloſer, and thoſe who were not ſo well able to endure this ſort of diſcipline, talked of ſending for the guards, and inclined to employ military force in defence of themſelves and their cauſe; the colonel had the wit to be ſick, and thereby kept himſelf from being involved in a meaſure, the conſequences of which he foreſaw, without expoſing himſelf to the ſuſpicions of his great friends, by diſapproving their remedy; which he knew, and they felt to be much worſe than the diſeaſe. I believe this was very little taken notice of, either at that time, or ſince, and yet it was one of the moſt prudent actions of his life; and that which ſhewed his underſtanding was better than many people took it to be, more eſpecially among the grandees, who are apt to fancy themſelves as much exalted by their abilities, as by their ſtations.

In dealing with them, the colonel always concealed, or gave a new turn to his vanity: for he never pretended to adviſe, but ſeemed always ready to obey, and appeared frequently officious in executing what he very well knew had been better let alone; but he thought, and perhaps he was

not

not much in the wrong, that he had a right to deceive thoſe who had deſpiſed him, and make his uſes of ſuch as thought they made him their tool. At leaſt thus much is certain, that as he knew how to ſerve the great which was one main point; he likewiſe knew how to find his account in it, which was another point, and this without continual ſollicitations, unleſs repeated ſervices could be accounted ſuch; for what ever was given him, he was ſo ſuper abundantly thankful, that he ſeemed to take that for grace and favour, which he knew as well as any body, was but barely the wages of his merit.

There were certain occaſions in private life, as in his military capacity, in which colonel *De Veil* gave very clear teſtimonies of his courage; but as he was not of a quarrelſome temper, and cautious enough of giving offence himſelf, ſo he was not over ready in taking up other people, but on the contrary, would paſs by many things, that in all probability would have made another man angry. He thought that as a magiſtrate, he was excuſed from deciding differences by the ſword, and at his time of life he judged it unneceſſary, for a man to ſtand very nicely upon punctilio's; yet in caſes where none of theſe excuſes took place, he ſhewed as much determined reſolution as any man, of which the following is a very particular inſtance.

Upon the firſt apprehenſion of a *French* invaſion, the *Swiſs* having formed a regiment voluntarily; there was an advertiſement publiſhed for a general meeting of the footmen about town, and *Hickford*'s great room was the place appointed; this ſome great people did not reliſh, believing that more hurt than good, might ariſe from ſuch an aſſembly, and therefore the colonel was deſired to hinder it; he went accordingly to the place, and directed that the room ſhould not be opened. When the footmen came and found themſelves diſappointed, they expreſſed a very high reſentment; and hearing that it was by colonel *De Veil*'s orders, they went immediately to his houſe in *Bow-ſtreet* in great numbers, and ſome of them forced in even to the colonels ſtudy in a very inſolent manner.

He was alone, but had a caſe of piſtols by him, and was ſo far from being intimidated by their rudeneſs, or the vollies of oaths they diſcharged upon the occaſion, that he ordered the door to be ſhut, and by the help of his ſervants and a conſtable ſecured ſome of them, which put the reſt whoſe numbers were by this time greatly increaſed into ſuch a fury, that they beat in the door of the houſe, tho' it was very ſtrong, reſcued their companions, and endeavour'd by threats to oblige the

colonel

colonel to ſend orders to deliver the key, which he abſolutely refuſed to do, notwithſtanding the peril he was in; and they upon the news that a guard was coming from the *Tilt-yard*, thought fit to withdraw, which was indeed the moſt prudent ſtep they could take, by which they avoided being called to an account for their bad behaviour.

This happened on *Saturday* the 10th of *March*, 1744, and the affair made ſo great a noiſe, that a proclamation was publiſhed in the *London-Gazette*, for apprehending *William Davis*, *James Brooks*, and *John White*, the perſons colonel *De Veil* had firſt ſecured, with the offer of a reward of one hundred pounds for apprehending the firſt, and fifty pounds a piece for the other two, but for any thing I know, this matter went no farther.

The pretence upon which theſe people would have aſſembled, was to find out ſome means to prevent their bread being taken from them by *Frenchmen* and Foreigners, and the town rung for ſometime with loud complaints of this nature, which like other topicks of clamour, was very differently received; ſome thinking they had, and others that they had not reaſon: but be that as it will, moſt undoubtedly ſuch a meeting at ſuch a time, was by no means well calculated, and tho' there might be no harm deſigned, yet the precaution uſed for preventing any accidents that might have attended ſuch a

tumultuous concourſe was certainly very proper and rational. After all, perhaps the preferring ſtrangers to our own people in that capacity, is not ſuch a diſgrace as is commonly conceived; on the contrary, it appears to me that it is a kind of compliment to the genius, even of the lower part of the *Britiſh* nation, that they are not ſo well qualified for footmen; neither can I be perſuaded till I ſee better reaſons, than have been hitherto offered, that any mighty injury is done to our people, by preferring foreigners to the honour of being lacqueys, becauſe I have ſeldom ſeen ſuch ſort of perſons ſo well provided for in their old age, as I could wiſh every *Engliſh* ſubject might be in the decline of life. Beſides, if it be conſidered that the greateſt part of the nobility, and all the *Engliſh* gentlemen of large eſtates that live upon them, and take care to preſerve them, keep *Engliſh* ſervants, the hardſhip is not ſo great as is imagined.

Thoſe who are ſo fond of foreign ſervants, are generally ſpeaking as fond of foreign cuſtoms, which are not ſo agreeable to thoſe who live with them, nor would the propagation of them among the lower ſort of people be of any advantage to this nation. It is therefore perhaps full as well, that *frenchified* people ſhould have *French* ſervants, that the contagion of foreign manners may be as much reſtrained as poſſible. This I muſt confeſs

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has very little to do with colonel *De Veil*, but digreſſions in hiſtory are faſhionable, more eſpecially when attended with political reflections, of which nature I deſire that theſe may be conſidered, particularly by, thoſe worthy perſons, the knights of the *moſt ancient order* of the RAINBOW, for whoſe uſe they are principally intended; and I hope if duly weighed, may have very good effects in keeping them quiet for the future; which as it will fully reward the pains I have taken, ſo I truſt it will ſufficiently excuſe the trouble I have given the reader. The fit of public ſpirit being quite over, I return cooly to the thread of my narration, which like of that of the colonel's life, is now pretty near ſpun.

It was about a month after this affair of the footmen, that the juſtices of the peace in the county of *Middleſex* thought it incumbent upon them, in a time of ſuch apprehenſions, to give his majeſty the ſtrongeſt aſſurance of their attachment to his perſon, and zeal for his government, which they did by a very warm and very well penned addreſs; upon the preſenting of which, colonel *De Veil* who on this, as upon all other occaſions, was very forward in expreſſing his loyalty, received with two other gentlemen in the commiſſion, the honour of knighthood, ſo that hence forward we are to ſtile him Sir *Thomas De Veil*. Upon the breaking out

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of the Rebellion in *Scotland*, and the juſt alarm that was occaſioned by it in this kingdom, Sir *Thomas De Veil* was extremely active in his ſtation, both as a juſtice of peace, and as colonel of the regiment of *Weſtminſter* militia; he was particularly careful in the execution of the warrants for taking up popiſh prieſts; eſpecially ſuch as claimed the protection of foreign miniſters, and it was owing to his skill and dexterity in that point, that the proclamations iſſued had their intended effect, in driving turbulent and ſeditious people out of the neighbourhood of this capital, without inflicting unneceſſary ſeverities, and creating the appearance of a perſecution, which how juſtifiable ſoever by the letter of the law, would by no means have been uſeful to the government.

In this reſpect he was not only capable of executing very ſenſibly what orders ſoever he receiv'd, but alſo of giving advice, he could judge perfectly of any informations that were given; he knew how to keep inferior officers to their duty, and to provide againſt their abuſing the mild diſpoſition of the government by doing nothing; acting againſt it by an officious and uſeleſs diligence; or converting to their own profit the indulgence of the ſtate. His behaviour in theſe matters recommended him extremely, not only as they were very acceptable ſervices, but as rendered in a very

tickliſh affair, and performed in a certain delicate manner, much eaſier to be conceived than expreſsed. We need not therefore be at all ſurprized, that his intereſt was at this juncture greater than ever, much leſs that he ſhould be able to procure his younger ſon an enſigns commiſſion as he did, and without queſtion, would have obtained him a better preferment if he had lived to have ſeen a proper opportunity of asking it, in which he was always very cautious; and perhaps his intereſt and the temper of the times conſidered, might be ſaid to be a little too nice; but that is a vice ſo uncommon in this age, that it may be forgiven him, as a ſingularity in his diſpoſition derived from nature, and not curable by art.

It is alſo certain, that though he ſtood ſo well with the great, and which was more, was known to ſtand well with them; yet he kept his credit with the public, to the full as well as could be expected, that is to ſay, every body acknowledged that he was a vigilant and active magiſtrate; and notwithſtanding any private views he might have, or pleaſures he might indulge, he was undoubtedly very ſerviceable to the community; kept bad people much in awe, and was able at any time to defeat, and diſperſe any of their gangs how formidable ſoever. Indeed there hardly ever was a magiſtrate ſo truly dreadfull in this reſpect to

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theſe ſort of people: for the very name of him was ſufficient to fright them, and they fancied his intelligence to be ſo good, that they were never ſafe from him; to ſay the truth, the pains he took in ſuppreſſing *Wreathorck*'s and the *Black-boy-alley* gang, if he had done nothing elſe, might in this reſpect have eſtabliſhed his character ſince, except *Cartouch* and his ſett of ruffians at *Paris*, there certainly never were more daring raſcals than theſe, who notwithſtanding deſerted all their uſual lurking holes, and abandoned their trade as ſoon as they knew that Sir *Thomas* was in ſearch of them, from whom they thought it impoſſible, either to hide their perſons, or conceal their crimes.

It is certainly the intereſt of every adminiſtration, to have ſuch a magiſtrate in the county of *Middleſex* if it be poſſible, becauſe he is very capable by the character he bears, and the influence he muſt neceſſarily obtain; of freeing them from abundance of trouble, as well as doing them continual, uſeful, and acceptable pieces of ſervice; and therefore in all probability, ſuch officers will never be wanted for the future, as we have ſhewn they were ſeldom or never wanted in times paſt: neither is this barely an advantage to men in power, or to be conſidered as a mere artifice of ſtate, ſince the public reaps very great benefit there from, and the very reputation of ſuch a magiſtrate, is a great

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ſecurity to their property, and more effectual for intimidating rogues than a double watch; but then care muſt be taken that this magiſtrate who has ſo much countenance ſhewn him, be a man capable of his employment, one who has a ſufficient degree of knowledge to act right, and a neceſſary degree of courage to ſupport him in acting; and either a fortune, or a ſpirit, that ſets him above mean and low actions; for otherwiſe he would be in danger of becoming himſelf as great a nuſance, as any he employs his authority to ſuppreſs.

But it is now time to come to the laſt ſcene of Sir *Thomas*'s life, and as we have attended him through a great variety of fortune, accompany him to that port, which once gained, no future ſhip-wrecks are to be feared in the turbulent ſea of this worlds affairs. He was always very aſſiduous and diligent in buſineſs, and as he had diſtinguiſhed himſelf thereby in the earlier part of his life, ſo he was to the full as indefatigable even to the very laſt; and may be truly ſaid, to have died in his profeſſion, for on *Monday* the 6th, of *October*, 1746, about five in the evening, after having ſpent ſometime in examining a priſoner, he was taken ſuddenly very ill, though he was obſerved to have been in very good ſpirits, and to all outward appearance in good health all day. A jelly was immediately brought him, which he was accuſtomed to take when he was at any time faint, he ſwal-

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lowed it, then roſe up went and looked in the glaſs, ſtroked his face and then ſat down again; ſoon after which his countenance changed, and from the moment he was taken, he loſt his ſpeech. A ſurgeon was ſent for who let him blood as ſoon as he came, it ran very freely in the operation, and what was drawn appeared very freſh and florid, they took from him in this manner ten ounces, and about the ſame quantity by cupping; he was then put to bed ſeven bliſters applied to ſeveral parts of his body, and all methods tried that could be thought of to make him vomit, but to no purpoſe.

He lay without expreſſing any ſenſe till the next morning about five o'clock, when he expired in the ſixty-third year of his age. He had always lead a pretty free life, which drew upon him the gout, of which he had many ſevere fits, and being by nature not over patient, he was eaſily prevailed upon to try a certain medicine, which he was aſſured would hinder it from coming upon him at that ſeaſon of the year, when he was moſt apprehenſive of it. After taking the medicine, he found himſelf better, and expreſſed great ſatisfaction at the thoughts of having for once got the better of his old antagoniſt: but many people think, that the morbific matter might by this means be tranſlated on the noble parts, and

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ſo prove the occaſion of his death; ſome of the circumſtances before mentioned, ſeeming to indicate plainly that it was not an appoplexy.

Sir *Thomas De Veil*, though he had been four times married, left no great family behind him, though he had by his wives in all twenty-five children. His firſt wife was Mrs. *Hancock*, who lived in the *Thomond* family, by whom he had the reverend Mr. *Hans De Veil*, late ſchool-maſter of *Flaſtead* in *Eſſex*, whom he bred at the univerſity at *Cambridge*, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his great vivacity, and had ſome turn to the mathematics as appeared by his writing while at college, an eſſay to explain the Phænomenon of the harveſt moon, He tranſlated alſo the amuſements of the *Spa* from the *French*, and writ ſeveral little pieces of poetry. Sir *Thomas* had by the ſame wife, a daughter, married to one Mr. *Thomas* who lived in the ſame family with her mother.

Sir *Thomas*'s ſecond match was purely from the motive of affection, he ſaw the lady accidentally in the *New-Exchange* in the *Strand*, made his addreſſes to and married her; by her he had three children that are now living, *viz.* a ſon who is lately come from abroad on account of the death of his father, a daughter who was married to a *Linnen-Draper* in *Cheapſide*, who is a widow, ano-

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ther daughter married to an attorney. His third wife was the ſiſter of one Mr. *Kingsman* an attorney in *Gray's-Inn*, and his fourth, a lady, who brought him a very fine perſon, and a very conſiderable fortune: he was a widower at the time of his deceas'd, and had been ſo for ſometime.

His corps was carried on *Saturday* the 11th, of *October* from his houſe in *Bow-ſtreet*, *Covent-Garden*, about ſix in the morning to *Denham* in *Buckinghamſhire*, two miles beyond *Uxbridge*, and was buried near that of his ſecond wife, the mother of all his ſurviving children. We have given theſe particulars, rather to ſhow our care in collecting what are commonly eſteemed neceſſary materials to a work of this nature, than from any perſuaſion that they really are ſo.

The perſonal hiſtory of a man that makes an extraordinary figure in the world, may be very uſeful to the public; but as to the circumſtances of his family, they are commonly ſuch as belong rather to the *Stone-cutter*, than to the hiſtorian; and though it muſt be allowed that they make a very pretty figure in a country church-yard; yet no eloquence can lend them ornaments ſufficient to make any *eclat* in a performance of this ſort, and therefore we ſhall quit them, to give

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the reader ſome free and impartial remarks upon his character.

It is the practice of all eminent Biographers, from *Plutarch* and *Cornelius Nepos*, down to the candid Mr. *Oldmixon*, and the reverend, as well learned Mr. *Loraine*, to enter into the private life of their heroes, which example of theirs muſt be followed, though with reluctancy. The *French* ſeem to me to have the advantage of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, for very often in their memoirs, you ſee nothing of the man, but he is a Judge, a General, or an Author all the way; if the firſt, he is an inſtance of ſingular penetration, and incorruptible probity; the valour of *Achilles*, and the wiſdom of *Ulyſſes*, fill up the ſecond character; and as for the third, the moſt extenſive learning, a refined taſte, and an imagination lively as the ſpring, and fruitful as the ſummer, are the ingredients that compoſe it. We muſt not conclude from hence, that the *French* heroes are abſolutely perfect, or that the writers of their memoirs, characters and eulogies, were ignorant of their foibles; but theſe they rejected as not falling within the compaſs of their plan, and in this, though I cannot commend their fidelity, yet I muſt applaud their ingenuity, for by this means, though their pictures are not extremely like, yet they are wonderfully handſome. But as this is not yet become

come the *English* taſte, therefore we muſt purſue the old method.

The gentleman of whom we are ſpeaking, as he was not very nice in his morals, ſo he was no hypocrite in his diſcourſe, he had failings, he knew them, and made no ſecret of them. He was of an aſpiring temper, he knew how to buſtle through the world, and valued himſelf not a little upon his dexterity in this reſpect. He was ſo extremely ſenſible, that great men valued littles ones in proportion, to the uſe they could make of them; that he thought it not allowable only, but laudable to make them uſeful in their turns, and in this he was ſo happy; that beſides other poſts which no man knew better how to render profitable than himſelf, he obtained a lucrative employment in the *Cuſtoms*, as a reward for that trouble, from which by his own skill, he found means to make it pay itſelf. He loved money, and affected magnificence; he was a man of pleaſure and never wanted reſources, for what it conſtantly requires unbounded expence. His greateſt foible was a moſt irregular paſſion for the *fair Sex*, which as he freely indulged, he made it often the ſubject of his diſcourſe.

He would tell many pleaſant ſtories of a certain gentleman of his own age and calling, who had a private cloſet for the examinati on of ſuch

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of the *fair ſex*, as were endowed with qualities capable of exciting a certain ſort of attention and regard. However, wanted pretences for conducting them into his cabinet, drawn from the inexpediency of letting other people hear the queſtion, he thought requiſite to aſk, and the anſwer that muſt be made to them; and though, perhaps there might be ſome little difficulties made, or ſome appearance of reluctance, ſhown to the entring upon theſe *tete a tete* conferences; yet this ſagacity in diſtinguiſhing ladies of a certain character, commonly prevented any unſeaſonable delay, in theſe cloſet entertainments, ſo that his uſual compliment upon coming out, was, *you ſee madam, that I am capable of being particularly dilligent and expeditious, in doing a lady's buſineſs.* He held it one of the greateſt inconveniences in matrimony, that theſe private examinations would now and then give uneaſineſs to a wife, and perhaps prove the ſubject of curtain converſation, that were not altogether ſo pleaſant.

This old gentleman had likewiſe a knack at coming at kept miſtreſſes, without taking any ſhare in the expence of keeping them; in order to which, he practiſed abundance of artifices, with the recital of which, our Knight would ſometimes make his company very merry. As for inſtance, if the lady, as it frequently hap-

pened, had a little of the termagant, and would now and then make the houſe where ſhe lodged, ring with her diſputes; his worſhip took care, that this ſhould be ſettled before him, and then in return for his civility, he was wont to enquire of the fair criminal, if ſhe had not a back-door to her lodging, where a chair might ſtop without ſuſpicion? at what ſeaſon her friend was out of town or engaged? and when an amicable viſit might be received, without interception? where this method could not be taken, the diſmiſſing a maid ſervant, or a quarrel about ſome liberties with her apparel, were made uſe of as proper means to procure an interview, which ſeldom failed of producing the deſired effect, of coming at the knowledge of the back-door, and all its entertaining intrigues, which not only put the faireſt and freſheſt *bona roba*'s into the hands of this cunning artiſt, but furniſhed him alſo, with the whole amorous hiſtory of the town, and afforded him ways and means of gaining an intereſt in, or an influence over the whole fraternity of *Keepers*.

There was yet another circumſtance, that contributed not a little to the old gentleman's diverſion, and ſometimes perhaps to his emolument alſo, which was the buſineſs of their ſpurious iſſue; for on the one hand, perhaps it was not altogether

together convenient, that this ſhould become a town talk, or it ſometimes fell out, that the lady was a little tender of her reputation, at leaſt of her perſon, did not care for viſits of pariſh officers, or the inſpection that naturally follows upon ſuch viſits. Now the only, or at leaſt, the moſt effectual method of avoiding theſe troubleſome inquiries, and ſo reſerving that ſecrecy and ſilence that are ſuitable to the rites of the goddeſs *Lucina*, was a reſpectful application to the old gentleman. He knew how to allay the ſtorms and tempeſts of parochial inquiſitors, and could, if the ſuitable meaſures were taken, render all things calm and quiet, ſo that the fair one had no other diſturbance than what her condition created, and might be afterwards at liberty to diſplay without the leaſt moleſtation, the kind effects of her lover's liberality in a magnificent chriſtening; where, if the father was a man of title and faſhion, perhaps the old gentleman himſelf, would condeſcend to be a gueſt, and then for taking care of the ladies, comforting the gentlewoman in the ſtraw, keeping up the good humours of the company with luſcious tales, he would out do even the parſon himſelf.

On certain occaſions however, even this grave gentleman found inconveniences ariſe from his dealings with the fair and great; for the former

would now and then put to the latter upon ſuch kind of requeſts, as could not be granted with eaſe, or denied with ſafety : ſometimes they would interfere in favour of their maids gallants, and become obnoxious to the law, for crimes that rendered them liable to infamous puniſhments; at other times they would be ſuitors for perſons of another character, though not of a better, I mean that race of men who deal in dice, and dreſs like lords, from the profits of a trade which *Bridewell* ſometimes rewards, but not according to their merit. More frequently they would interpoſe out of regard to certain old decayed gentlewomen of their acquaintance, that were ſo kind as to accommodate young ſinners, and took a pleaſure in promoting thoſe pleaſures they were paſt taking. Theſe were clients that though they ſeldom came empty handed, were notwithſtanding the moſt unwelcome, becauſe no indulgence could be granted, but at the expence of his worſhip's private reputation, as well as the ſecurity of the public. Yet ſo importunate they were, and knew ſo well how to intereſt their patrons in ſupport of their cauſe, bad as they were, that they could not be denied. Ways and means therefore muſt be uſed, and in ſuch caſes, recourſe was frequently had to another pernicious race of animals, ſtiled *petty-foggers*, a kind of inſects bred out of the corruption and excrements of the law, that like all other vermin

are a ſcandal to the body, upon which they feed, and to which in that ſenſe only, they can be ſaid to belong.

Theſe fellows were always ready to help out at a dead lift, more eſpecially when they were ſure of connivance, they knew how to contrive a free paſſage for the firſt ſort of folk, by the ſecret of converting broomſticks into bail, by the ſame art they ſometimes relieved the ſecond, and were it failed, they were well acquainted with a kindred tribe of ſcoundrels, who wear ſtraws in their heels, and who are ſaid to uſe *Weſtminſter-Hall* for their parade: as for the third, the ſpirit of a pariſh proſecution, was frequently allayed by two or three good dinners. The motherly woman in diſtreſs changed her name, and the quarter of the town ſhe lived in; and thus the vicious was ſkreen'd in this world, and their crimes left to the cognizance of that tribunal, were no arts can avail, and were all parties muſt meet with their juſt deſerts. No wonder then that even thoſe find themſelves obliged to wink at ſuch evaſions of juſtice, feel ſome kind of remorſe, and are a little afflicted with the conſciouſneſs, that there will a time come when theſe ſecrets will be diſcloſed, and when not only the guilty, but thoſe who have averted puniſhment will be called to an account.

Such bloomy thoughts as theſe, would ſometimes provoke

provoke bitter reflections againſt thoſe whoſe grandeur not only ſet them above the neceſſity of doing right, or the fear of being puniſhed for doing wrong, but of extending this impunity to the creatures of their will, the implements of their crimes, and the tools of their iniquities. But theſe bitter reflections were all in ſecret, not a word was openly uttered, and the old man's diſtraction of mind, paſſed only for a peeviſhneſs of temper. A humour ſaid to be incident to old age, which is true, but incident from a retroſpection of times paſt, for otherwiſe old age may be the pleaſanteſt part of a man's life, and if it is not, it is generally ſpeaking his own fault. This only by the bye, and to give the reader a drop of morality in a draught of amuſement.

But it was not barely in the way of his Office, that this old acquaintance of the Knights ſhewed the vigour of his conſtitution, and his unquenchable fondneſs for the fair; he diſcovered it likewiſe, in being himſelf a keeper, and as his friends reported, he was as ſingular as pleaſant in his manner of managing, for having frequent calls out of town, ſometimes upon buſineſs, ſometimes on parties of pleaſure. He took it into his head that there could be nothing more convenient, than to have a female acquaintance, in ſome or other of the villages upon each of the great roads about town, that he might never be at a loſs for

a ſoft companion when in the humour, and this extravagant whim he puſhed to ſuch a length, as to have four or five in keeping at a time. It muſt be confeſſed, that there is ſomething ſo wild and odd in this circumſtance, that at firſt ſight, it ſeems abſolutely incredible, but notwithſtanding this, it was very confidently ſaid when the ſtory was told, that if his name had been mentioned, there were numbers living, who could vouch that it was literally true.

The tale however, that appeared moſt out of the road of fact, with regard to this ſame knight-errant, was an unaccountable fancy, that he took to a very fine old lady of ſeventy, to whom, having entered into a kind of engagement not very ſuitable to either of their years, he thought himſelf ſo much bound to keep his word, that he rode forty miles, I cannot ſay, whether it was poſt or not, for this very valuable purpoſe. One may gueſs from the nature of theſe ſtories, that his head was ſometimes occupied with freaks of a like kind, which certainly did him no credit; and though it cannot be expected, that a man ſhould be always grave, and never lay aſide the magiſtrate; yet, there is a medium to be kept, even in this, and I have often thought, that the manner in which, a certain great prelate concludes his character of a man of high quality, *viz. that*

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he was decent, even in his vices, ought to be a momento to all ſinners of rank, to whom, by theſe preſents I recommend it.

But to return for the laſt time, to Sir *Thomas De Veil*. As it is highly probable, that ſome who ſucceed him in his office, may look upon his conduct, as worthy of imitation, I ſhall take the liberty for their ſake, and that of the public, to point out two things which they will do well to conſider, as nothing can be of greater conſequence to them, than avoiding the one, and nothing capable of raiſing their reputation more, than out-doing him if poſſible in the other. We have ſhown, that in the whole courſe of his life, this gentleman did not want a bold, and puſhing ſpirit, but after he came to be a juſtice of Peace, and more eſpecially, in the latter part of his life, whether it was, that he grew vain of the reſpect paid him, and of his great intereſt, or, whether his natural paſſion grew too ſtrong for him, ſo it was, that he gave way to a haſty, and vehement way of ſpeaking, which was apparently inconſiſtent with the nature of his employment, and was ſometimes diſreſpectful in regard to the perſon, before whom it broke out. When a perſon is brought before a juſtice of peace for any crime, it is on ſuſpicion only, and care ſhould therefore be taken, not to treat the party accuſed, as if he

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was already convicted, and the example of the judges in *Weſtminſter-Hall* in ſuch caſes, as an example that every magiſtrate may be proud to copy.

They behave always not only with the utmoſt impartiality, but with the utmoſt mildneſs and decency their zeal appears in the execution of the laws, but without any diminution of that tenderneſs which humanity requires for thoſe, that however bad they may be, are ſtill our fellow creatures, and our fellow ſubjects.

But whatever his error might be in regard to the point laſt mentioned, it is certain, that he was very careful as to another of equal importance. He knew that all the power that he had, were derived from law, and therefore never forgot that they were circumſcribed and bounded by Law.

He was therefore very cautious in all his Proceedings, took great Care to diſtinguiſh whether what came before him was ſo properly within his cognizance, or not, and were it had any reference to a ſtatute; the letter of the law was his guide, and he never took it into his head, that it became him to aſſume any power of Conſtruction.

He had a juſt tenderneſs for the Warrants of the judges, upon which he would never take bail, if any of their lordſhips were in town; and tho' nobody had ſtudied the buſineſs of a juſtice of peace more, or underſtood it better, yet he held it both ſafeſt, and beſt, to keep within the limits of his juriſdiction, and not advance to, much leſs beyond them. He was very cautious and apprehenſive, when any *Old-Bailey* ſolicitor appeared before him, and generally entertained a bad opinion of ſuch as brought them; and this had one good conſequence, which was, that it made him equally ſtrict in the inquiry into what was his duty, and in the diſcharge of it, when it became known to him upon that inquiry.

By this circumſpection, he fenced againſt thoſe ſort of people better than another man would have done, even of quicker parts and more good-nature; for he always took time to ſettle his judgment, and when it was ſettled, no intreaties or menaces could move him. He was ſenſible, that if he meant well, and did right, he ſhould be ſure of ſupport; and as he neither wanted addreſs in maintaining his own cauſe, or opportunity of being heard by thoſe to whom the deciſion of it muſt always belong, he gave himſelf no great pain either about private application, or public clamour.

Theſe are the principal circumſtances that it has been found practicable to collect in regard to this ſubject; they have been ranged in their natural order, and have been fully and fairly expoſed for the ſake of truth and juſtice to poſterity, without any mixture of prejudice or prepoſſeſſion; without the deſire of pleaſing, or the fear of offending any party; and if they contribute in any degree to the edification or amuſement of the public, they will fully anſwer the ends of their publication, and perhaps excite ſome better pen to do juſtice to the abilities of the man, who ſhall attempt to exceed Sir *Thomas Deveil* in his zeal for the public ſervice, without falling into any of his Foibles.

F I N I S.

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MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

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